

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

SPECIAL ORDER NO. 26

August 14, 2001

SUBJECT: COLOR-CODING OF TRAINING FIREARMS

PURPOSE: On average, three police officers are killed every year nationwide as a result of improper handling of firearms during training. These accidents typically occur with firearms that officers erroneously believed were unloaded. Despite the Department's well established safety rules for the proper handling of firearms, officers have been shot while practicing firearm retention techniques or when participating in situation/simulation scenarios. While training must be accomplished in a realistic manner, the prevailing objective must be to eliminate the risk of an accidental shooting.

Color-coding enhances safety by allowing for the immediate visual identification of the firearm being utilized. This Order introduces a color-coding marking system for firearms and replica firearms utilized in training sessions involving situation/simulation scenarios.

PROCEDURE: **Officers shall never** point a firearm capable of firing live ammunition at another person during training. Officers participating in any non live-fire training such as situation/simulation scenarios where the need to simulate the use of a firearm is necessary, shall **only** utilize firearms that have been rendered unable to fire live ammunition. In addition, officers shall only utilize firearms that have been color-coded, and approved as training firearms by the Firearms Training Unit, Training Division.

I. FIREARMS COLOR-CODING. Firearms shall only be color-coded by the Firearms Training Unit, Training Division. Color-coding shall be applied to the stock (grip) of the firearm or as needed to the slide handle of a shotgun, the hand guard of a rifle, or other portions of the firearm such as the barrel and sling. Color-coding shall be applied as follows:

- 1. Yellow:** A modified firearm capable of firing only blank rounds.
- 2. Blue:** A modified firearm capable of firing only paintball or paint-type rounds.
- 3. Orange:** A firearm disabled and unable to fire any type of ammunition.
- 4. Green:** Less-lethal weapons such as the beanbag shotgun.

5. **No color-code:** Firearms capable of firing live ammunition.

II. AREA/DIVISION TRAINING COORDINATOR'S RESPONSIBILITY.

Training coordinators shall conduct training in accordance with established Training Division procedures. In addition, coordinators shall:

- * Ensure that firearms obtained for training are forwarded to the Firearms Training Unit, Training Division, for color-coding, modification, and approval as training firearms;
- * Only utilize firearms that have been color-coded and approved as training firearms by the Firearms Training Unit, Training Division; and,
- * Maintain a repository of training firearms.

III. TRAINING DIVISION RESPONSIBILITY. The Firearms Training Unit, Training Division, shall coordinate with Area/division training coordinators to color-code, modify, inspect, and approve all existing and newly acquired firearms used for training. Additionally, the Firearms Training Unit, Training Division, shall provide support and advice to entities conducting firearms/tactics training.

IV. AREA/DIVISION COMMANDING OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITY.

Commanding officers shall ensure that training is conducted in accordance with established Training Division procedures. Commanding officers shall also ensure that firearms utilized have been color-coded, modified as necessary, and approved for training by the Firearms Training Unit, Training Division.

AMENDMENTS: This Order adds Section 3/611.70 to the Department Manual.

AUDIT RESPONSIBILITY: The Commanding Officer, Training Group, shall monitor compliance with this directive in accordance with Department Manual Section 0/080.30.

BERNARD C. PARKS
Chief of Police

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